THE NEW LONDON COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

INCORPORATED 1870

SHAW MANSION NEW LONDON, CONN. 11 BLINMAN STREET

QUARTERLY BULLETIN

VOLUME 11 NOVEMBER 1965 NUMBER 4

LECTURE SERIES

As a service, not only to its members, but also to the general public, our Society is sponsoring a lecture series. Programs scheduled for November 17th and December 1st will be open to the public with admission free. Both will be held in the parlors of the Second Congregational Church located at Broad and Hempstead street, New London. The time will be 8:00 P.M.

We have been fortunate in obtaining two well-known lecturers for the opening events of the series.

On November 17th, Edgar deN. Mayhew, Associate Director of the Lyman Allyn Museum, New London, will give an illustrated talk on, "Changing Tides in American Taste." He will present the shifting pattern of American taste in architecture, sculpture, painting, and the minor arts. The field covered will fall for the most part in the 19th century, but will be brought up to 1965, illustrated as much as possible by local examples.

On December 1st, Abbott L. Cummings, Assistant Director of the Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities, in Boston, Mass., will give an illustrated talk on, "What Houses should we Preserve -- Why?" With the continued loss of landmarks that cannot be replaced, this has become a matter of serious concern, especially in areas where redevelopment is in process or is contemplated.

Mr. Cummings has authored many articles in the field of American architectural history. He works closely with the historical background, preservation of architectural features, and appropriate furnishings of his Society's many (over 40) historic properties.

Both speakers are outstanding in their particular fields, and in their appeal to audiences.

We do hope that as many members as possible will attend both of these events and bring friends with them. Since there is a fine array of speakers available with a great variety of subjects, we are looking forward to continuing the program in the spring.

Neighboring historical societies have been notified of this series.

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ANNUAL MEETING

Our Annual Meeting was held on September 28th at the Mohican Hotel with eighty persons in attendance.

A certificate commemorating twelve years of dedicated service was presented to Past President, Dwight C. Lyman.

Dr. Charles E. Shain, President of Connecticut College, addressed the group, taking as his subject, "The American Past Through Foreign Eyes." The topic included England's reasons for favoring the Confederacy during the Civil War. Dr. Shain made reference to several English novels of the Civil War period and showed how the authors echoed the sentiments of their country.

The following slate of officers presented by the Nominating Committee, composed of Adam Knox, Chairman, Mrs. J. Warren Horton,

Mrs. Stanton Latham, and Miss Helen Whiton, was elected:

President - Carlton F. Small

Vice Presidents - Edmund C. Johnston, Mrs. James E. Maher, and Oscar A. Seaholm.

Secretary - Miss Hazel Johnson

Treasurer - Winthrop Bank and Trust Company

Finance Committee - E. Gorton Rogers, Chairman, Ralph E. Wadleigh, and G. Laurens Attwill.

Advisory Board - Mrs. Charles A. Allen, Mrs. J. Warren Horton, Mrs. W. Ellery Allyn, Miss Margaret Heyer, Miss Elsie Fengar, Mrs. Stanton Latham, Mrs. James E. Maher, Miss Helen Whiton, Mrs. Alfred Young, Jr., Ralph Wadleigh, Charles B. Gardner, Edgar deN. Mayhew, Philip N. Jordan, Jr., E. Gorton Rogers.

Rev. Merle H. Mason gave the invocation, and spoke in memory of those members who had passed away during the year.

Arrangements for the affair were made by Henkle Scott.

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ACQUISITIONS

Saybrook Vital Records, and 28 early New London imprints from 1717 to 1820, were purchased from the Public Library.

The Connecticut State Library donated Cemetery records for Sterling and Plainfield.

A Bible with records of the Hempstead and Sisson families, together with a photograph of William Hempstead who was born about 1815, were given by Mr. Joseph M. Sullivan, Jr.

Gifts to add to our collection of exhibits were received as follows:

Chemise, nightcap, net scarf, mitts, from Miss Edna Wells.

Child's dress, circa 1860, grey and white stripe, trimmed with navy blue, from Miss Mary Talcott.

Baleen dowsing rod, and 18th century shoe buckles, from Mr. R. S. Kloss, South Lyme.

Carved ironwood war-axe, and shark's-tooth-edged, wooden sword, from Mrs. Albert Cross formerly of New London, but now living in West Hartford. These are South Sea Island weapons given to her father, Mr. Hand, by the captain of a ship, probably the latter half of the 19th century.

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HISTORICAL SIGNS

The Connecticut League of Historical Societies has an official member on the Connecticut State Historical Commission. He reports that historical signs furnished by the Historical Commission are being put up this year by the Connecticut State Park and Forest Department in seventeen of the State parks. Those at Rocky Neck, East Lyme and Harkness Memorial, Waterford, list the Hempsted, Shaw, and Deshon-Allyn houses in New London. The one at Waterford also mentions the Old Town Mill in New London, and the Groton Monument.

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BOOKS

It occurred to us that our members might be interested in some of the books listed in the September issue of the LEAGUE BULLETIN:

Everybody likes a good meal and the fast way to a good old one is through "American Cookery," by Amelia Simmons. This 1796 cook book tells you how to smother a fowl in oysters or how to boil asparagus. But most of all, how to get the best out of eating. The William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., Grand Rapids, Mich. - $3.50.

Do you have one of those items lying about the house which always seems to draw the comment, "I remember when we used this for....?" If you do, then you have what authors Amoret and Christopher Scott call a "bygone," that is, an article of utility

rather than ornament whose function has been taken over by some other article. This book is full of such items, and illustrations clear up any guesswork. Check the pages, you might have some valuable and interesting bygones. David McKay Co., 750 Third Ave., New York, New York - $3.95.

The first theater in English America begun in Williamsburg in 1716, is the starting point for author Hugh F. Rankin in his account of, "The Theater in Colonial America." And the impact of the theater on culture, studied from the viewpoint of an historian, comes forth from old playbills, records, and accounts of both large and small problems. This book should prove to be of special interest to the student of drama and literature, and of colonial culture. The University of North Carolina Press, Chapel Hill, North Carolina - $6.00.

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PAST EVENTS

A while ago, "THE DAY" noted that on September 21, 1940, Elmer H. Spaulding was elected president of this Society, and at the meeting, George S. Chappell, architect and humorist was the featured speaker.

Also in its September 2nd issue "The Day" referred to the meeting fifty years ago in 1915 when Ernest E. Rogers was re-elected president. At that meeting the treasurer, Lee S. Denison, reported that the Society owned the Shaw Mansion free of debt, and had an endowment fund.

Going further back it printed in the April 17th issue this year that seventy-five years ago an announcement was made under date of April 17, 1890, that the New London County Historical Society expected to occupy quarters in the Public Library Building.

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Custodian in residence:
Mrs. Charles Menery

Corresponding Secretary and Curator:
Mrs. Adam Knox

The Society's telephone number is:
443-1209

REMINDER

Important dates in the near future.

NOVEMBER 17th

DECEMBER 1st

From The New London County Historical
Society, Shaw Mansion
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